

DGuzik 33 Micah

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(Mic 1:1)

Introduction

This is the prophetic message that the LORD gave to¹ Micah of Moresheth. He delivered this message² during the reigns of³

Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. The prophecies pertain to⁴ Samaria⁵ and Jerusalem.⁶

(Guzik)

Mic 1:1-16

MICAH 1 - COMING JUDGMENT ON ISRAEL AND JUDAH

A. Coming judgment on Israel.

1. (Mic_1:1) Introduction to the prophecy of Micah.

The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

a. **Micah of Moresheth:** The city of **Moresheth** (also called *Moresheth Gath* in Mic_1:14) was about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem on the border lands between Judah and the Philistines. This means that the prophet **Micah** was like the prophet Amos, a man from the country sent to the city to bring **the word of the LORD**.

i. We really don't know anything about Micah's background or call, but we do know that he had a strong sense of his own calling as a prophet, and he says so in Mic_3:8.

b. **In the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah:** This means that Micah ministered as a prophet some time between the years 739 B.C. (the start of the reign of **Jotham**) and 686 B.C. (the end of the reign of **Hezekiah**). Since Hezekiah was a noted reformer, we can surmise that

the sin Micah confronted mainly concerns the time before the important reforms of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18-20).

c. **Concerning Samaria and Jerusalem:** The city of **Samaria** was the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, and **Jerusalem** was the capital of the southern kingdom of Judah. Micah looks to both the northern and southern kingdoms in his prophecy.

i. In Judah during this time, King **Ahaz** was a particularly evil ruler. In Israel, there were a succession of evil kings.

2. (Mic_1:2-5) The LORD comes to judge Israel and Judah.

Hear, all you peoples! Listen, O earth, and all that is in it! Let the Lord GOD be a witness against you, the Lord from His holy temple. For behold, the LORD is coming out of His place; He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth. The mountains will melt under Him, and the valleys will split like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place. All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What *is* the transgression of Jacob? *Is it* not Samaria? And what *are* the high places of Judah? *Are they* not Jerusalem?

a. **The LORD is coming out of His place:** With vivid images, Micah sees the LORD descending from heaven to earth, and coming with judgment. If the **mountains** and **valleys** cannot stand before Him, what hope does sinful, rebellious man have?

b. **All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel:** This dramatic, powerful descent of the LORD is only because of the **sins of** His people.

i. It is easy to imagine that the people of Judah and Israel thought this was unfair. They looked around at the pagan nations surrounding them and saw that they were even more corrupt than themselves. Nevertheless, the principle stands: *For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God* (1Pe_4:17). However, we also do well to remember the

second part of that verse: *And if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?*

3. (Mic_1:6-7) Samaria left desolate in judgment.

“Therefore I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the field, places for planting a vineyard; I will pour down her stones into the valley, and I will uncover her foundations. All her carved images shall be beaten to pieces, and all her pay as a harlot shall be burned with the fire; all her idols I will lay desolate, for she gathered *it* from the pay of a harlot, and they shall return to the pay of a harlot.”

a. **I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the field:**

Micah prophesies the coming judgment on **Samaria**, the capital city of Israel. This was fulfilled in 722 B.C. when Samaria fell to the Assyrians and was completely destroyed.

b. **All her pay as a harlot shall be burned with the fire:** Micah combines the ideas of idolatry and spiritual adultery.

Money spent on idols and their worship will be brought to nothing when the mighty army of the Assyrians destroys Samaria.

i. “Golden images, of such monetary value yet so spiritually and politically worthless, were constructed from the wages of cult prostitutes. The conquerors will break them up and use the money to repeat the same cycle. Only the heart of depraved man could worship gods like that!” (Waltke)

B. Coming judgment on Judah.

1. (Mic_1:8-9) The agony of announcing judgment on the nation of Judah.

Therefore I will wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked; I will make a wailing like the jackals and a mourning like the ostriches, for her wounds *are* incurable. For it has come to Judah; it has come to the gate of my people; to Jerusalem.

a. **I will wail and howl:** Micah can't prophesy in a dispassionate, detached way. When he sees judgment coming upon his people, it makes him **wail and howl like the jackals**.

i. Micah didn't just announce judgment and then yawn. He cared so deeply that he wept with God's people. The preacher's duty is more than to just announce judgment and to walk away. He has to *care*. "Many who have rejected a Christian's logic have been won by his tears." (Boice)

b. **For her wounds are incurable:** Our only **incurable** wounds are the ones we refuse to bring to God. With Him, all things are possible (Luk_18:27), but when we refuse to bring our sin to Him, then our **wounds are incurable**.

2. (Mic_1:10-16) The shame of Judah's judgment is evident among the nations.

Tell *it* not in Gath, weep not at all; in Beth Aphrah roll yourself in the dust. Pass by in naked shame, you inhabitant of Shaphir; the inhabitant of Zaanan does not go out. Beth Ezel mourns; its place to stand is taken away from you. For the inhabitant of Maroth pined for good, but disaster came down from the LORD to the gate of Jerusalem. O inhabitant of Lachish, harness the chariot to the swift steeds (she *was* the beginning of sin to the daughter of Zion), for the transgressions of Israel were found in you.

Therefore you shall give presents to Moresheth Gath; the houses of Achzib *shall be* a lie to the kings of Israel. I will yet bring an heir to you, O inhabitant of Mareshah; the glory of Israel shall come to Adullam. Make yourself bald and cut off your hair, because of your precious children; enlarge your baldness like an eagle, for they shall go from you into captivity.

a. **Tell it not in Gath:** The city of **Gath** belonged to the Philistines, and it hurts Micah to think that the Philistines will rejoice at the pain of God's people.

b. **In Beth Aphrah roll yourself in the dust:** Following to the end of the chapter, Micah uses puns and plays on words to talk about the judgment coming upon the cities of Judah. These towns are clustered in the *Shephelah* - the lowlands between the coastal region and the mountains of Judah.

i. Though Micah uses puns, this isn't about clever word games - it goes back to the ancient idea that a name isn't just your "handle" but describes - sometimes prophetically - your *character* and your *destiny*. In showing how the name of these cities is in some way a prophecy of their destiny, Micah shows how our character becomes our future.

c. **Beth Aphrah**: To Micah, **Aphrah** sounds like the Hebrew word for *dust*, so he told the citizens of **Beth Aphrah** to roll in the dust in anticipation of coming judgment.

d. **Shaphir**: The name of this town sounds like the word for *beautiful*. It won't be beautiful for long, and Micah warns the citizens of **Shaphir** to prepare for judgment.

e. **Zaanan**: The name of this town sounds like the Hebrew word for *exit* or *go out*. When the siege armies come, they won't *exit* at all - they will be shut up in the city until it falls.

f. **Beth Ezel**: The name of this town means *the nearby city*. When the army of judgment comes, it won't be near and helpful to any other city.

g. **Maroth**: The name of this town means *bitterness*, and when the army of judgment comes the citizens of **Maroth** will know plenty of bitterness.

h. **Lachish**: The name of this town sounds like the Hebrew word for *to the horses*. **Lachish** was an important fortress city, and they should go *to the horses* to fight, but ironically they will go *to the horses* to flee the army of judgment.

i. **Moreseth**: The name of this - Micah's hometown - sounds like the Hebrew word for *betroted*. Here he speaks of giving the city wedding gifts as she passes from the rule of one "husband" (Judah) to another (the invading army).

j. **Aczib**: The name of this town sounds like the Hebrew word for *deceitful* or *disappointing*. This city will fall so quickly it will be a deception and a disappointment for Israel.

k. **Mareshah**: The name of this town is related to the Hebrew word for *possessor* or *heir*. The invading army will soon possess this city.

I. **Adullam**: The was the place of refuge for David when he fled from King Saul. It will again be a place of refuge for the high and mighty among Israel, when they are forced to hide out in **Adullam**.

(Mic 1:2) ***The Judge is Coming***

Listen, all you nations!7

Pay attention, all inhabitants of earth!8

The sovereign LORD will testify9 against you;

the LORD will accuse you10 from his majestic palace.11

(Mic 1:3) Look,12 the LORD is coming out of his dwelling place!

He will descend and march on the earth's mountaintops!13

(Mic 1:4) The mountains will disintegrate14 beneath him,

and the valleys will be split in two.15

The mountains will melt16 like wax in a fire,

the rocks will slide down like water cascading down a steep slope.17

(Mic 1:5) All this is because of Jacob's rebellion

and18 the sins of the nation19 of Israel.

How has Jacob rebelled, you ask?20

Samaria epitomizes their rebellion!21

Where are Judah's pagan worship centers, you ask?22

They are right in Jerusalem!23

(Mic 1:6) "I will turn Samaria²⁴ into a heap of ruins in an open field —

vineyards will be planted there!²⁵

I will tumble²⁶ the rubble of her stone walls²⁷ down into the valley,

and tear down her fortifications to their foundations.²⁸

(Mic 1:7) All her carved idols will be smashed to pieces;

all her metal cult statues will be destroyed by fire.²⁹

I will make a waste heap³⁰ of all her images.

Since³¹ she gathered the metal³² as a prostitute collects her wages,

the idols will become a prostitute's wages again."³³

(Mic 1:8) For this reason I³⁴ will mourn and wail;

I will walk around barefoot³⁵ and without my outer garments.³⁶

I will howl³⁷ like a wild dog,³⁸

and screech³⁹ like an owl.⁴⁰

(Mic 1:9) For Samaria's⁴¹ disease⁴² is incurable.

It has infected⁴³ Judah;

it has spread to⁴⁴ the leadership⁴⁵ of my people

and has even contaminated Jerusalem!⁴⁶
(Mic 1:10) Don't spread the news in Gath!⁴⁷

Don't shed even a single tear!⁴⁸

In Beth Leaphrah sit in the dust!⁴⁹
(Mic 1:11) Residents⁵⁰ of Shaphir,⁵¹ pass by in nakedness
and humiliation!⁵²

The residents of Zaanan can't leave their city.⁵³

Beth Ezel⁵⁴ mourns,⁵⁵

"He takes from you what he desires."⁵⁶
(Mic 1:12) Indeed, the residents of Maroth⁵⁷ hope for
something good to happen,⁵⁸

though the LORD has sent disaster against the city of
Jerusalem.⁵⁹
(Mic 1:13) Residents of Lachish,⁶⁰ hitch the horses to the
chariots!

You⁶¹ influenced Daughter Zion⁶² to sin,⁶³

for Israel's rebellious deeds can be traced back⁶⁴ to you!
(Mic 1:14) Therefore you⁶⁵ will have to say farewell⁶⁶ to
Moresbeth Gath.

The residents⁶⁷ of Achzib⁶⁸ will be as disappointing

as a dried up well⁶⁹ to the kings of Israel.⁷⁰
(Mic 1:15) Residents of Mareshah,⁷¹ a conqueror will attack
you,⁷²

the leaders of Israel shall flee to Adullam.⁷³

(Mic 1:16) Shave your heads bald as you mourn for the children you love;⁷⁴

shave your foreheads as bald⁷⁵ as an eagle,⁷⁶

for they are taken from you into exile.

(Mic 2:1) ***Land Robbers Will Lose their Land***

Those who devise sinful plans are as good as dead,¹

those who dream about doing evil as they lie in bed.²

As soon as morning dawns they carry out their plans,³

because they have the power to do so.

(Guzik)

Mic 2:1-13

MICAH 2 - GOD'S SINFUL PEOPLE

A. The sins of covetousness and pride.

1. (Mic_2:1-2) Covetousness among God's people.

Woe to those who devise iniquity, and work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. They covet fields and take *them* by violence, also houses, and seize *them*. So they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance.

a. **Woe to those who devise iniquity:** All sin is bad before God, but *premeditated* sin is worse. Here Micah speaks plainly to those who **devise iniquity** - in this case - those who oppress others through their greed and covetousness.

b. **At morning light** is ironic. Typically thieves practice their work at night, under the cover of darkness. In the ancient world, law courts opened for business **at morning light** because the rising sun demonstrated light dispelling darkness.

Micah sees the corruption of Israel's law courts and shows that they practice their theft and evil **at morning light**, when the courts open.

c. **Because it is in the power of their hand:** There are some sins we never commit because we are never put in a place where we can commit them. The real test comes when **it is in the power of** our **hand** to sin and we keep faithful to the LORD.

2. (Mic_2:3-5) God's proud people brought low.

Therefore thus says the LORD: "Behold, against this family I am devising disaster, from which you cannot remove your necks; nor shall you walk haughtily, for this *is* an evil time. In that day *one* shall take up a proverb against you, and lament with a bitter lamentation, saying: 'We are utterly destroyed! He has changed the heritage of my people; how He has removed *it* from me! To a turncoat He has divided our fields.'" Therefore you will have no one to determine boundaries by lot in the assembly of the LORD.

a. **Against this family I am devising disaster:** The people devised iniquity; God devised disaster upon them. In His justice, He gave them what they gave others.

b. **Nor shall you walk haughtily, for this is an evil time:** Micah rebukes the pride among God's people and announces that in the **evil time** to come - the time of judgment coming on God's people - they will be brought low and will no longer **walk haughtily**.

c. **To a turncoat He has divided our fields:** In the coming judgment - in particular, the judgment coming on Israel by the conquering Assyrian Empire - will leave their land in the possession of strangers.

B. Though they sin against His Word, God promises restoration to His people.

1. (Mic_2:6-9) God's people reject the word of His prophets.

"Do not prattle," *you say to those* who prophesy. So they shall not prophesy to you; they shall not return insult for insult. *You who are* named the house of Jacob: "Is the Spirit

of the LORD restricted? *Are these His doings?* Do not My words do good to him who walks uprightly? Lately My people have risen up as an enemy; you pull off the robe with the garment from those who trust *you*, as they pass by, like men returned from war. The women of My people you cast out from their pleasant houses; from their children you have taken away My glory forever.”

a. **Do not prattle:** When God’s prophets came to His people, they didn’t receive it. They disregarded God’s Word as mere **prattle**. As a result, God stopped sending prophets (**so they shall not prophesy to you**). Fortunately, God’s people responded to Micah’s warning before God stopped sending him - but it took a while.

i. Micah began his ministry in the reign of Jotham - but nobody listened. Then he prophesied during the reign of Ahaz - but nobody listened. Finally he prophesied during the reign of Hezekiah - and the leaders and the people repented. Micah didn’t give up, even though results were slow in coming. Micah preached for anywhere between 16 and 25 years before there was any response.

b. **Is the Spirit of the LORD restricted?** In their foolishness, the people of Israel thought that *God* was the problem.

They needed to understand that there was no restriction on **the Spirit of the LORD**; instead *they* provided all the restriction.

i. “Do you not think, again, that we very much act as if the Spirit of the Lord were straitened *when we only look for little blessing* s? I am very glad to see three hundred or four hundred persons in a year converted and added to this church, and this has long been the case; but if I ever imbibed the idea that this was all that might be done, I should be straitening the Spirit of God.” (Spurgeon)

c. **Do not My words do good to him who walks uprightly?** The key to their preservation in the midst of judgment was to stick tightly to God’s **words**. When they

reject God's **words**, they are left poor and destitute - both materially and spiritually.

2. (Mic_2:10-11) God's people embrace false prophets.

"Arise and depart, for this *is* not *your* rest; because it is defiled, it shall destroy, yes, with utter destruction. If a man should walk in a false spirit and speak a lie, *saying*, 'I will prophesy to you of wine and drink,' even he would be the prattler of this people."

a. **This is not your rest:** Micah exposes the lies of false prophets showing that they can never really give **rest**. The words of false prophets are **defiled**, and bring **utter destruction** instead of the peace, rest, and restoration of God's Word.

b. **If a man should walk in a false spirit and speak a lie:** With judgment looming on the horizon - especially for the northern kingdom of Israel - there were false prophets who spoke of days of **wine and drink**, giving false comfort and hope to a deceived people. These were the real "prattlers," not the true prophets of God, as they were falsely called by the ungodly in Micah's day (Mic_2:6). The only prophet they wanted was one to tell them there would be plenty of alcohol.

3. (Mic_2:12-13) A promise of restoration.

"I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of the fold, like a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make a loud noise because of *so many* people. The one who breaks open will come up before them; they will break out, pass through the gate, and go out by it; their king will pass before them, with the LORD at their head."

a. **I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob:** Though judgment was promised because of the great sin of God's people, they could not "out-sin" the grace and goodness of God. He still promises restoration to **the remnant of Israel**.

b. They shall make a loud noise because of so many people: The remnant will not be few; there will be **many people** brought back to the LORD and His ways - **with the LORD at their head.**

c. The one who breaks open can be translated as a title - the King James Version has it as *the Breaker*. We can see this as a more obscure, but no less precious messianic title of Jesus - *The Breaker*. In this office, he is the captain and leader of His people, advancing in front of His flock. How we need a *Breaker*, a trailblazer in our life!

(Mic 2:2) They confiscate the fields they desire,

and seize the houses they want.⁴

They defraud people of their homes,⁵

and deprive people of the land they have inherited.⁶

(Mic 2:3) Therefore the LORD says this: "Look, I am devising disaster for this nation!⁷

It will be like a yoke from which you cannot free your neck.⁸

You will no longer⁹ walk proudly,

for it will be a time of catastrophe.

(Mic 2:4) In that day people will sing this taunt song to you
—

they will mock you with this lament:¹⁰

'We are completely destroyed;

they sell off¹¹ the property of my people.

How they remove it from me!¹²

They assign our fields to the conqueror.'¹³

(Mic 2:5) Therefore no one will assign you land in the LORD's community.¹⁴

(Mic 2:6) 'Don't preach with such impassioned rhetoric,' they say excitedly.¹⁵

'These prophets should not preach of such things;

we will not be overtaken by humiliation.'¹⁶

(Mic 2:7) Does the family¹⁷ of Jacob say,¹⁸

'The LORD's patience¹⁹ can't be exhausted —

he would never do such things'?²⁰

To be sure, my commands bring a reward

for those who obey them,²¹

(Mic 2:8) but you rise up as an enemy against my people.²²

You steal a robe from a friend,²³

from those who pass by peacefully as if returning from a war.²⁴

(Mic 2:9) You wrongly evict widows²⁵ among my people from their cherished homes.

You defraud their children²⁶ of their prized inheritance.²⁷

(Mic 2:10) But you are the ones who will be forced to leave!²⁸

For this land is not secure!²⁹

Sin will thoroughly destroy it!³⁰
(Mic 2:11) If a lying windbag should come and say,³¹

'I'll promise you blessings of wine and beer,'³²

he would be just the right preacher for these people!³³
(Mic 2:12) ***The Lord Will Restore His People***

I will certainly gather all of you, O Jacob,

I will certainly assemble those Israelites who remain.³⁴

I will bring them together like sheep in a fold,³⁵

like a flock in the middle of a pasture;³⁶

they will be so numerous that they will make a lot of noise.³⁷

(Mic 2:13) The one who can break through barriers will lead them out³⁸

they will break out, pass through the gate, and leave.³⁹

Their king will advance⁴⁰ before them,

The LORD himself will lead them.⁴¹

(Mic 3:1) ***God Will Judge Judah's Sinful Leaders***

I said,

"Listen, you leaders¹ of Jacob,

you rulers of the nation² of Israel!

You ought to know what is just,³
(Guzik)

Mic 3:1-12

MICAH 3 - AGAINST PRINCES AND PROPHETS

A. God against the princes of His people.

1. (Mic_3:1-3) The violence of leaders against God's people. And I said: "Hear now, O heads of Jacob, and you rulers of the house of Israel: *Is it* not for you to know justice? You who hate good and love evil; who strip the skin from My people, and the flesh from their bones; who also eat the flesh of My people, flay their skin from them, break their bones, and chop *them* in pieces like *meat* for the pot, like flesh in the caldron."

a. **Hear now, O heads of Jacob:** Previously, Micah addressed his comments to God's people in general. Now he specifically speaks to their leaders, because they have both a special responsibility and accountability before God.

b. **You who hate good and love evil:** If this description isn't bad enough, Micah goes on to illustrate how terribly the leaders of Israel and Judah "use" the people - as if they were cannibals feasting on the people of God.

i. "Since the grinding poverty of the poor was leading them into an early grave, the prophet, in a sustained metaphor, depicts the magistrates responsible for creating these conditions as acting like cannibals. This grotesque figure aims to awaken the conscience of the reprobates." (Waltke)

ii. This reminds us the people never exist for the sake of the leaders, but leaders are there for the sake of the people.

A leader should never serve God's people dominated by the question, "What is in it for me?" When they do, they are like the cannibalistic leaders described by Micah.

2. (Mic_3:4) God's judgment of silence against corrupt leaders.

Then they will cry to the LORD, but He will not hear them; He will even hide His face from them at that time, because

they have been evil in their deeds.

a. **Then they will cry to the LORD, but He will not hear them:** This is one example of God's judgment against the corrupt leaders. When they cry out for God's help, He will remain silent.

b. **He will even hide His face from them at that time:** One aspect of the blessing pronounced by the priests of Israel was asked the LORD to *make His face shine upon you* (Num_6:25). Here, Micah promises the opposite of this blessing -

that God would **even hide His face from them at that time.**

B. God against the false prophets to His people.

1. (Mic_3:5-7) The sin and promised judgment of false prophets.

Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who make my people stray; who chant "Peace" while they chew with their teeth, but who prepare war against him who puts nothing into their mouths: "Therefore you shall have night without vision, and you shall have darkness without divination; the sun shall go down on the prophets, and the day shall be dark for them. So the seers shall be ashamed, and the diviners abashed; indeed they shall all cover their lips; for *there is no answer from God.*"

a. **The prophets who make my people stray:** Micah returns to a previous theme first mentioned in Mic_2:11 - the false prophets who bring hollow comfort and pretend peace to God's people.

b. **The sun shall go down on the prophets:** Through Micah, God announces that He will bring the false prophets into complete confusion and disrepute. They will have **no answer from God** and therefore they **shall be ashamed.**

2. (Mic_3:8) Micah's confidence as a true prophet of God.

But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, and of justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.

a. **I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD:** In contrast to the coming shame of the false prophets, Micah has a justified confidence in the LORD who called Him as a prophet. Because he knows God and is close to God and His word, Micah knows that he is **full of power by the Spirit of the LORD**.

i. Micah also knew that the **power** came **by the Spirit of the LORD**, not by anything in Micah. The power also came from **justice and might**, because Micah knew he was on the side of God's word and God's strength.

ii. "We must have the Holy Spirit, and if we have him not, all our machinery will stand still; or if it goes on, it will produce no effect whatever. I heard of a Christian man whose mill-wheel was noticed to be in motion on a certain Sunday. The people going to worship greatly wondered there at; but one who went by set their minds at rest by pointing out that the wheel was only turning idly round, because the water, by accident, was allowed to flow over it.

But the man said, 'It is very like our minister and his sermons. There is no work being done, but the wheel goes round, clickety click, clickety click, though it is not grinding anything.' Therein it also greatly resembles many an organization for spiritual service: the water is passing over it, glittering as it flows; but the outside motion does not join on to any human need, nor produce any practical result, and nothing comes of the click and hum." (Spurgeon) b. **To declare to Jacob his transgression:** Like most prophets in the Old Testament, Micah's job was to expose the sin of God's people.

i. We might say that under the New Covenant, prophets have a somewhat different calling. Under the Old Covenant, the law was not written on the heart of the believer and the Holy Spirit did not indwell each believer in the same way as under the New Covenant.

ii. Therefore, there was a greater need for the convicting work of the Spirit of God coming from the "outside," from

prophets such as Micah. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul described the ministry of the prophet like this: *But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men* (1Co_14:3). This certainly doesn't mean that under the New Covenant prophecy will never be used to expose sin, but it certainly isn't its central purpose.

3. (Mic_3:9-12) Unrepentant Jerusalem will share Samaria's fate of destruction.

Now hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who abhor justice and pervert all equity, who build up Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity: her heads judge for a bribe, her priests teach for pay, and her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD, and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No harm can come upon us." Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed *like* a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the temple like the bare hills of the forest.

a. **Now hear this . . . who build up Zion with bloodshed and Jerusalem with iniquity:** In this chapter, Micah first spoke to the judges, then to the prophets - now he speaks to the princes, **you heads of the house of Jacob**. The rulers of Jerusalem were not much better than the rulers of Israel, and could expect similar judgment unless they repented.

b. **Yet they lean on the LORD, and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No harm can come upon us"** : The leaders of Jerusalem had a false confidence in religious ritual and form. All the while, judgment was appointed for Jerusalem unless they repented.

i. The great thing about the Prophet Micah was that he was listened to. Hosea was ignored, and so was Amos. They threw Jeremiah in jail for his prophetic message of coming judgment. In contrast, King Hezekiah and the leadership of Judah listened to the Prophet Micah.

ii. Jer_26:17-19 describes how even a hundred years later the impact of Micah was remembered: *Then certain of the elders of the land rose up and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying: "Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spoke to all the people of Judah, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, And the mountain of the temple Like the bare hills of the forest."' Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah ever put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and seek the Lord's favor? And the Lord relented concerning the doom which He had pronounced against them. But we are doing great evil against ourselves."*

iii. "He was heard in the days of Hezekiah. A revival followed. Then, one hundred years later, his words were still remembered, and the memory of what happened earlier was used of God to spare the life of Jeremiah." (Boice) (Mic 3:2) yet you⁴ hate what is good,⁵

and love what is evil.⁶

You flay my people's skin⁷

and rip the flesh from their bones.⁸

(Mic 3:3) You⁹ devour my people's flesh,

strip off their skin,

and crush their bones.

You chop them up like flesh in a pot¹⁰ —

like meat in a kettle.

(Mic 3:4) Someday these sinners will cry to the LORD for help,¹¹

but he will not answer them.

He will hide his face from them at that time,

because they have done such wicked deeds."

(Mic 3:5) This is what the LORD says: "The prophets who mislead my people

are as good as dead.¹²

If someone gives them enough to eat,

they offer an oracle of peace.¹³

But if someone does not give them food,

they are ready to declare war on him.¹⁴

(Mic 3:6) Therefore night will fall, and you will receive no visions;¹⁵

it will grow dark, and you will no longer be able to read the omens.¹⁶

The sun will set on these prophets,

and the daylight will turn to darkness over their heads.¹⁷

(Mic 3:7) The prophets¹⁸ will be ashamed;

the omen readers will be humiliated.

All of them will cover their mouths,¹⁹

for they will receive no divine oracles."²⁰

(Mic 3:8) But I²¹ am full of the courage that the LORD's Spirit gives,

and have a strong commitment to justice.²²

This enables me to confront Jacob with its rebellion,

and Israel with its sin.²³

(Mic 3:9) Listen to this, you leaders of the family²⁴ of Jacob,

you rulers of the nation²⁵ of Israel!

You²⁶ hate justice

and pervert all that is right.

(Mic 3:10) You²⁷ build Zion through bloody crimes,²⁸

Jerusalem²⁹ through unjust violence.

(Mic 3:11) Her³⁰ leaders take bribes when they decide legal cases,³¹

her priests proclaim rulings for profit,

and her prophets read omens for pay.

Yet they claim to trust³² the LORD and say,

"The LORD is among us.³³

Disaster will not overtake³⁴ us!"

(Mic 3:12) Therefore, because of you,³⁵ Zion will be plowed up like³⁶ a field,

Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins,

and the Temple Mount³⁷ will become a hill overgrown with brush!³⁸

(Mic 4:1) ***Better Days Ahead for Jerusalem***

In the future¹ the LORD's Temple Mount will be the most important mountain of all;²

it will be more prominent than other hills.³

People will stream to it.

(Guzik)

Mic 4:1-13

MICAH 4 - THE LORD REIGNS OVER RESTORED ZION

A. The character of restored Zion.

1. (Mic_4:1-3) Zion is the center of a renewed earth.

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations

afar off; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

a. **The mountain of the Lord's house . . . shall be exalted above the hills:** This speaks of the ultimate exaltation of Jerusalem, the City of Zion, in the LORD's ultimate restoration. This will be fulfilled completely in the Millennium, when **the peoples shall flow to** a restored and redeemed Jerusalem as the capital of the millennial earth (**out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem**).

i. Mic_4:1-3 is repeated in Isa_2:1-3. Since Isaiah and Micah were contemporary prophets, it isn't surprising that the same Spirit of the LORD could give these two prophets the same word, to establish and emphasize His word.

ii. The glorious transformation of the mountain of the Lord is especially wonderful in light of what the sinning people of God did to it: *Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, and the mountain of the temple like the bare hills of the forest.* (Mic_3:12)

b. **He will teach us His ways:** With the prophet's eye Micah sees the world streaming into Jerusalem to meet with the Lord GOD, and to know Him better.

c. **He shall judge between many peoples:** During the reign of the Messiah, there will be no more war. There will still be conflicts between nations and individuals, but they will be justly and decisively resolved by the Messiah and those who reign with Him (**He shall judge between the nations, and shall rebuke many people**).

i. It isn't the reign of the Messiah itself that will change the heart of man. Citizens of earth will still need to trust in Jesus and His work on their behalf for their personal salvation during the millennium. But war and armed conflict will not be tolerated.

d. **Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore:** It is important to

see that this is not the peace of capitulation. This is the peace of enforced righteousness. There is no more war, and no more need for **swords** - so why not make them into **plowshares**? There is no more war because there is a new ruler on earth, Jesus Christ. Psa_2:9 tells us what the Messiah will do to the disobedient in that day: *You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.*

i. We long for the day when there is no more need for a military budget, when the money that goes for weapons and armies can go to schools and parks. But we are only safe doing that when the Messiah reigns among us!

e. In 1941 Franklin Roosevelt gave a famous speech about four freedoms: freedom of *speech*, freedom of *religion*, freedom from *want*, and freedom from *fear*. Mic_4:1-5 describes four freedoms: · Freedom from *ignorance* (**He will teach us His ways**)

· Freedom from *war* (**Neither shall they learn war anymore**) · Freedom from *want* (**everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree**) · Freedom from *fear* (**no one shall make them afraid**)

2. (Mic_4:4-5) The blessed people of restored Zion.

But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make *them* afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

a. **Everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree**: This is a proverbial expression that means prosperity and peace (1Ki_4:25, 2Ki_18:31).

b. **We will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever**: In the Millennial reign, the inhabitants of earth will not be compelled to follow the LORD. Some will **walk each in the name of his god**; yet those who do **walk in the name of the LORD** will enjoy great blessing and peace.

3. (Mic_4:6-8) The gathering of restored Zion.

“In that day,” says the LORD, “I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted; I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation; so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever. And you, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, to you shall it come, even the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.”

a. **I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation:** God’s restoration isn’t just for the strong, but the weak and disadvantaged will especially know the blessing of His restoration.

b. **To you shall it come:** These promises are so glorious that it would be easy for Israel to think they are too good to be true. Therefore, God gives them a special promise, vowing **to you it shall come**.

B. The birth of restored Zion.

1. (Mic_4:9-10) The pain before Zion’s restoration.

Now why do you cry aloud? *Is there* no king in your midst? Has your counselor perished? For pangs have seized you like a woman in labor. Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in birth pangs. For now you shall go forth from the city, you shall dwell in the field, and to Babylon you shall go. There you shall be delivered; there the LORD will redeem you from the hand of your enemies.

a. **Pangs have seized you like a woman in labor:** After spelling out the glory of restored Zion, now Micah tells them of some of the pain they will experience before it comes. Part of the pain will be a lack of leadership (**no king in your midst . . . counselor perished**).

b. **To Babylon you shall go. There you shall be delivered:** As is common in the prophets, Micah intertwines ages -

having just spoken of the Millennial Earth, now he speaks of Israel’s deliverance from Babylonian captivity.

2. (Mic_4:11-13) The strength of restored Zion among the nations.

Now also many nations have gathered against you, who say, "Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion." But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, nor do they understand His counsel; for He will gather them like sheaves to the threshing floor.

"Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hooves bronze; you shall beat in pieces many peoples; I will consecrate their gain to the LORD, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth."

a. **Many nations have gathered against you:** Though the nations were set against Israel, the LORD was for them (**they do not understand the thoughts of the LORD**). The LORD will deal with Israel's enemies as easily as a farmer deals with the **sheaves** of grain on the **threshing floor**.

b. **I will make your horn iron:** When the Lord restores Zion, He will restore them in strength - as strong as an ox with an **iron** horn. This has its ultimate fulfillment in the Millennium when Israel will be lifted up as a "superpower" among the nations.

i. "The ox pulling the threshing-sledge represents the people of God. She is supernaturally equipped with *horns of iron*, symbolizing her invincibility, and with *hoofs of bronze*, with which she treads the pride and pretensions of the enemy exceedingly fine." (Waltke) (Mic 4:2) Many nations will come, saying,

"Come on! Let's go up to the LORD's mountain,

to the temple⁴ of Jacob's God,

so he can teach us his commands⁵

and we can live by his laws."⁶

For Zion will be the source of instruction;

the LORD's teachings will proceed from Jerusalem.⁷
(Mic 4:3) He will arbitrate⁸ between many peoples

and settle disputes between many⁹ distant nations.¹⁰

They will beat their swords into plowshares,¹¹

and their spears into pruning hooks.¹²

Nations will not use weapons¹³ against other nations,

and they will no longer train for war.

(Mic 4:4) Each will sit under his own grapevine

or under his own fig tree without any fear.¹⁴

The LORD who commands armies has decreed it.¹⁵

(Mic 4:5) Though all the nations follow their respective
gods,¹⁶

we will follow¹⁷ the LORD our God forever.

(Mic 4:6) ***Restoration Will Follow Crisis***

"In that day," says the LORD, "I will gather the lame,

and assemble the outcasts whom I injured.¹⁸

(Mic 4:7) I will transform the lame into the nucleus of a new
nation,¹⁹

and those far off²⁰ into a mighty nation.

The LORD will reign over them on Mount Zion,

from that day forward and forevermore."²¹

(Mic 4:8) As for you, watchtower for the flock,²²

fortress of Daughter Zion²³ —

your former dominion will be restored,²⁴

the sovereignty that belongs to Daughter Jerusalem.

(Mic 4:9) Jerusalem, why are you²⁵ now shouting so loudly?

²⁶

Has your king disappeared?²⁷

Has your wise leader²⁸ been destroyed?

Is this why²⁹ pain grips³⁰ you as if you were a woman in labor?

(Mic 4:10) Twist and strain,³¹ Daughter Zion, as if you were in labor!

For you will leave the city

and live in the open field.

You will go to Babylon,

but there you will be rescued.

There the LORD will deliver³² you

from the power³³ of your enemies.

(Mic 4:11) Many nations have now assembled against you.

They say, "Jerusalem must be desecrated,³⁴

so we can gloat over Zion!"³⁵

(Mic 4:12) But they do not know what the LORD is planning;

they do not understand his strategy.

He has gathered them like stalks of grain to be threshed³⁶
at the threshing floor.

(Mic 4:13) "Get up and thresh, Daughter Zion!

For I will give you iron horns;³⁷

I will give you bronze hooves,

and you will crush many nations."³⁸

You will devote to the LORD the spoils you take from them,

and dedicate their wealth to the sovereign Ruler³⁹ of the
whole earth.⁴⁰

(Mic 5:1) (4:14)¹ But now slash yourself,² daughter
surrounded by soldiers!³

We are besieged!

With a scepter⁴ they strike Israel's ruler⁵

on the side of his face.

(Guzik)

Mic 5:1-15

MICAH 5 - A RULER FROM BETHLEHEM

A. The birth and the work of the Ruler from Bethlehem.

1. (Mic_5:1-2) From the lowly and humble in Israel comes a Ruler.

Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; he has laid siege against us; they will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek. "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, from everlasting."

a. **He has laid siege against us:** Israel will be humbled by foreign powers, and even her judges will bear insults.

b. **But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah . . . out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel:** In this time of humiliation under foreign powers, God will raise up a great **Ruler** from a humble place - **Bethlehem**.

i. **Bethlehem** was well known as the hometown of David, Israel's greatest king; yet it was never a great or influential city. It was truly **little among the thousands of Israel**. Yet God chose it as the birthplace of the Messiah, the **Ruler in Israel**.

ii. This passage from Micah 5 was quoted by the chief priests and teachers of the law when Herod asked about the birth of the Messiah (Mat_2:5-6).

iii. **Bethlehem** means *House of Bread*, and Jesus is the Bread of Life (Joh_6:35). "And now for that word *Ephrata* h. That was the old name of the place which the Jews retained and loved. The meaning of it is, 'fruitfulness,' or 'abundance.' Ah! well was Jesus born in the house of fruitfulness; for whence cometh my fruitfulness and thy fruitfulness, my brother, but from Bethlehem? Our poor

barren hearts never produced one fruit or flower, till they were watered with the Savior's blood." (Spurgeon)

c. **Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting:** This glorious promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and Micah's prophetic voice declares that though Jesus came from Bethlehem, He did not *begin* there. His **goings forth** are from eternity past.

i. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. (Rev_22:13) This means from the very beginning, Jesus was there. There was never a time when the Jesus did not exist.

ii. Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, He existed as the *Second Person of the Trinity* (Joh_17:5; Joh_17:24).

These passages tell us that there was a relationship of love, fellowship, and shared glory that the Father and the Son shared in eternity past. The name "Jesus" was not known as a name for the Second Person of the Trinity until the angel Gabriel announced it to Mary (Luk_1:31). But the eternal Son existed before He revealed Himself as "Jesus."

iii. Before Bethlehem, Jesus was the creator of all things (Col_1:16-17, Joh_1:1-3). "He was *before* all things. As he is the *Creator* of all things, so he is the *Eternal*, and *no part* of what was *created*. All *being* but God has been *created*. Whatever has *not been created* is God. But Jesus is the *Creator* of all things; therefore he is God; for he cannot be a *part* of his *own work*." (Clarke) iv. In the Old Testament, Jesus appeared as God made visible or "The Angel of the LORD." There are many instances in the Old Testament where individuals are shown to have had a face to face encounter with the LORD.

(Gen_16:7-13, Genesis 18, Gen_32:24-32, Jos_5:13-15, Jdg_6:11-24, Jdg_13:8-24, Daniel 3). In each situation, the Person is given different titles, but in all cases the person is plainly referred to as the LORD Himself, but appearing in a human form.

v. From eternity past, God's plan of the ages included Jesus (1Pe_1:20, Eph_1:4).

vi. Knowing that Jesus' **goings forth are from of old, from everlasting** shows us some important things: • It shows us the glory of Jesus, that He is far more than a man

- It shows us the love of Jesus, that He would leave the glory of heaven for us

- It shows us the nature of Jesus, that He would add humanity to His deity

- It shows us the sympathy of Jesus, that He remains fully man and fully God

2. (Mic_5:3-5 a) The Ruler serves His flock.

Therefore He shall give them up, until the time *that* she who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. And He shall stand and feed *His flock* in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; and they shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth; and this *One* shall be peace.

a. **He shall give them up, until the time:** Micah anticipates a future time - partially fulfilled in the Babylonian exile and return, ultimately fulfilled in the Great Tribulation and restoration of Israel - when the LORD will seem distant from Israel **until the time** for restoration is ready.

b. **Then the remnant of His brethren shall return . . . He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the Lord:** After the time of Israel's trial the LORD will restore gloriously. The *Ruler* born in Bethlehem will tenderly care for **His flock in the strength of the LORD.**

c. **They shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth:** The greatness of the *Ruler* from Bethlehem becomes the standing of His people. They **abide** because of His greatness.

d. **This One shall be peace:** It isn't just that the *Ruler* from Bethlehem *brings peace*; He *is peace*. As Paul wrote of

Jesus in Eph_2:14, *He is our peace*.

3. (Mic_5:5-6) The Ruler delivers Jacob from Assyria.

When the Assyrian comes into our land, and when he treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princely men. They shall waste with the sword the land of Assyria, and the land of Nimrod at its entrances; thus He shall deliver *us* from the Assyrian, when he comes into our land and when he treads within our borders.

a. **When the Assyrian comes into our land:** After the pattern of the prophets, Micah blends near and distant ages in his prophecy. The threat of the **Assyrian** would come against both kingdoms shortly, but Micah also uses the *idea* of the **Assyrian** for any pagan nation or empire set against God's people.

b. **We will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princely men:** Though the enemies of God's people come against them, under God's blessing leaders will **raise against** them. God often works this way to **deliver us** from our enemies.

B. The triumph of the remnant of Jacob.

1. (Mic_5:7-9) The remnant is large and triumphant.

Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples, like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, that tarry for no man nor wait for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, who, if he passes through, both treads down and tears in pieces, and none can deliver. Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off.

a. **The remnant of Jacob shall be . . . like dew from the Lord:** When God delivers Zion it won't be a "small" deliverance. It will spread as wide as the **dew** and **showers on the grass**.

b. **Like a young lion among flocks of sheep:** When God delivers Zion, it won't be a "weak" deliverance. It will strengthen Israel so that she will triumph over her enemies like a **lion** against **sheep**. This has its ultimate fulfillment in the Millennial Earth, when it is said that the lion will lie down with the lamb - but still, it's better to be the lion!

2. (Mic_5:10-15) The LORD is exalted among the remnant.

"And it shall be in that day," says the LORD, "That I will cut off your horses from your midst and destroy your chariots. I will cut off the cities of your land and throw down all your strongholds. I will cut off sorceries from your hand, and you shall have no soothsayers. Your carved images I will also cut off, and your sacred pillars from your midst; You shall no more worship the work of your hands; I will pluck your wooden images from your midst; thus I will destroy your cities. And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury on the nations that have not heard."

a. **I will cut off your horses . . . the cities of your land . . . your strongholds . . . your sorceries . . . your carved images . . . your sacred pillars:** In restored Zion, the LORD will not allow any of the idolatries Israel once indulged in. Instead, He will **cut off** all of those things, whether they are basically good (**horses** or **cities**) or intrinsically evil (**sorceries . . . sacred pillars**).

b. **I will execute vengeance . . . on the nations that have not heard:** God will not only look after Israel's purity; in the Millennial Earth **the nations** will also need to walk in purity before Him.

(Mic 5:2) ***A King Will Come and a Remnant Will Prosper***
(5:1) As for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,⁶

seemingly insignificant⁷ among the clans of Judah —

from you a king will emerge who will rule over Israel on my behalf,⁸

one whose origins⁹ are in the distant past.¹⁰
(Mic 5:3) So the LORD¹¹ will hand the people of Israel¹²
over to their enemies¹³

until the time when the woman in labor¹⁴ gives birth.¹⁵

Then the rest of the king's¹⁶ countrymen will return

to be reunited with the people of Israel.¹⁷
(Mic 5:4) He will assume his post¹⁸ and shepherd the
people¹⁹ by the LORD's strength,

by the sovereign authority of the LORD his God.²⁰

They will live securely,²¹ for at that time he will be
honored²²

even in the distant regions of²³ the earth.
(Mic 5:5) He will give us peace.²⁴

Should the Assyrians try to invade our land

and attempt to set foot in our fortresses,²⁵

we will send²⁶ against them seven²⁷ shepherd-rulers,²⁸

make that eight commanders.²⁹
(Mic 5:6) They will rule³⁰ the land of Assyria with the sword,

the land of Nimrod³¹ with a drawn sword.³²

Our king³³ will rescue us from the Assyrians

should they attempt to invade our land

and try to set foot in our territory.

(Mic 5:7) Those survivors from³⁴ Jacob will live³⁵

in the midst of many nations.³⁶

They will be like the dew the LORD sends,

like the rain on the grass,

that does not hope for men to come

or wait around for humans to arrive.³⁷

(Mic 5:8) Those survivors from Jacob will live among the nations,

in the midst of many peoples.

They will be like a lion among the animals of the forest,

like a young lion among the flocks of sheep,

which attacks when it passes through;

it rips its prey³⁸ and there is no one to stop it.³⁹

(Mic 5:9) Lift your hand triumphantly against your adversaries;⁴⁰

may all your enemies be destroyed!⁴¹

(Mic 5:10) ***The Lord Will Purify His People***

"In that day," says the LORD,

"I will destroy⁴² your horses from your midst,

and smash your chariots.

(Mic 5:11) I will destroy the cities of your land,

and tear down all your fortresses.

(Mic 5:12) I will remove the sorcery⁴³ that you practice,⁴⁴

and you will no longer have omen readers living among you.⁴⁵

(Mic 5:13) I will remove your idols and sacred pillars from your midst;

you will no longer worship what your own hands made.

(Mic 5:14) I will uproot your images of Asherah⁴⁶ from your midst,

and destroy your idols.⁴⁷

(Mic 5:15) I will angrily seek vengeance

on the nations that do not obey me."⁴⁸

(Mic 6:1) ***The Lord Demands Justice, not Ritual***

Listen to what the LORD says:

"Get up! Defend yourself¹ before the mountains!²

Present your case before the hills!"³

(Guzik)

Mic 6:1-16

MICAH 6 - IN THE COURT OF THE LORD

A. The LORD's complaint against His people.

1. (Mic_6:1-2) In court with the LORD.

Hear now what the LORD says: "Arise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear, O you mountains, the Lord's complaint, and you strong foundations of the earth; for the LORD has a complaint against His people, and He will contend with Israel.

a. **Arise, plead your case:** Micah pictures a court of law, with Israel "on trial" before the Lord. In the presence of unshakable witnesses (**the mountains** and **the hills** and the **strong foundations of the earth**), the court comes to order.

b. **The LORD has a complaint against His people, and He will contend with Israel:** In His court, God will bring His case - His **complaint** against Israel.

2. (Mic_6:3-5) The LORD's complaint against His people.

"O My people, what have I done to you? And how have I wearied you? Testify against Me. For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab counseled, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him, from Acacia Grove to Gilgal, that you may know the righteousness of the LORD."

a. **Testify against Me:** As Israel steps up to the witness stand, God asks them, "**What have I done to you?** " He has done nothing but good to Israel, and has been repaid with rejection and rebellion.

b. **I redeemed you from the house of bondage:** Not only did God *not* do evil to Israel, He also did them an enormous amount of *good*. He **redeemed** them and gave them godly leaders. God's case against Israel looks pretty good.

c. **Remember now what Balak king of Moab counseled:** After meeting with King Balak of Moab, Balaam prophesied over Israel four times. As he spoke forth God's word, he did not curse Israel - but he blessed them each time.

When he was unsuccessful in cursing Israel, Balaam **answered** Balak on how to bring Israel under a curse. Instead of trying to have a prophet curse them, the Moabites lead them into fornication and idolatry, and God will curse them. Balak did just that, sending his young women into the camp of Israel to lead Israel into sexual immorality and idolatry. Because of their sin, God did curse Israel - He brought a plague of judgment upon Israel that killed 24,000.

i. In light of this, Israel must **remember** that God could never be persuaded to curse Israel, except if they brought curses on themselves through their own disobedience and rebellion. Like a great lawyer in court, God shows Israel that if they feel cursed in any way, it is entirely their responsibility.

3. (Mic_6:6-7) The answer of His people: "What can I do?"

With what shall I come before the LORD, *and* bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul?

a. **With what shall I come before the LORD:** This is a question asked out of bitterness and resentment. Israel calls out to God from the witness stand, and says: "Just what do You want from me?"

b. **Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousand rivers of oil?** We can almost hear Israel shouting at God from the witness stand. "You ask too much, God. Nothing will satisfy You. If we brought **thousands of rams** or **rivers of oil** or even my own **firstborn** it would not be enough. You are unreasonable."

i. “Blinded to God’s goodness and character, he reasons within his own depraved frame of reference. He need not change; God must change . . . His willingness to raise the price does not reflect his generosity but veils a complaint that God demands too much.” (Waltke)

4. (Mic_6:8) The reply of the LORD: “He has shown you.”

He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

a. **He has shown you:** God stops the shouting of the angry defendant from the witness box. “You act as if it is some mystery what I require of you. In point of fact it is no mystery at all. I have **shown you** clearly **what is good** and what I **require of you**.”

b. **To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God:** The LORD answers the contentious witness in open court. “What I require of you isn’t complicated. Simply do three things.”

c. **Do justly:** “Act in a just, fair way towards others. Treat them the way you want to be treated.”

d. **Love mercy:** “Don’t just show mercy, but *love* to show it. Give others the same measure of mercy you want to receive from the Me.”

e. **Walk humbly with your God:** “Remember who I am - *your God*. If you keep that in mind, you will *walk humbly* before Me.”

i. “I would not advise any of you to try to be humble, but to be humble. As to acting humbly, when a man forces himself to it, that is poor stuff. When a man talks a great deal about his humility, when he is very humble to everybody, he is generally a canting hypocrite. Humility must be in the heart, and then it will come out spontaneously as the outflow of life in every act that a man performs.” (Spurgeon)

ii. Spurgeon’s sermon *Micah’s Message for Today* applied the idea of how to **walk humbly with your God**: · Walk humbly when you are spiritually strong

- Walk humbly when you have much work to do
- Walk humbly in all your motives
- Walk humbly studying God's word
- Walk humbly when under trials
- Walk humbly in your devotions
- Walk humbly between you and your brothers in Christ
- Walk humbly when dealing with sinners

iii. "True humility is thinking rightly of thyself, not meanly. When you have found out what you really are, you will be humble, for you are nothing to boast of. To be humble will make you safe. To be humble will make you happy.

To be humble will make music in your heart when you go to bed. To be humble here will make you wake up in the likeness of your Master by-and-by." (Spurgeon)

f. God has proven His case before the court. Israel is afflicted, but it is not because of the neglect or disregard of God. Their own sin brought their affliction upon them. In addition, what God required of them was not mysterious or too difficult - they simply did not do it.

B. The voice of the LORD cries out in the city.

1. (Mic_6:9-12) God sees the injustice and deceit of Israel.

The Lord's voice cries to the city; wisdom shall see Your name: "Hear the Rod! Who has appointed it? Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and the short measure *that is* an abomination? Shall I count pure *those* with the wicked scales, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For her rich men are full of violence, her inhabitants have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth."

a. **Hear the Rod! Who has appointed it?** Israel *felt* the rod of God, but did not **hear** it. God tells them to **Hear the Rod**, both in the sense of the *rod* as a picture of the corrective discipline of God, and in the sense that **the Rod** can be personified as the voice of God Himself.

i. "We can rest contentedly in our sins and in our stupidities; and anyone who has watched gluttons shoveling down the

most exquisite foods as if they did not know what they were eating, will admit that we can ignore even pleasure.

But pain insists on being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” (C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*)

b. **The short measure that is an abomination . . . wicked scales . . . deceitful weights:** God was angry with Israel for plain old cheating in money matters. They lied and stole and cheated one another, all for the sake of making some money off each other.

c. **Her rich men are full of violence:** The sin of Israel went further than just cheating others in business and commerce; they also made themselves rich through plain **violence**. They could expect the judgment of God for such sin.

i. “No society is ever entirely upright or godly; there are always evil people in it. But in a well-functioning society the evil are suppressed and those of good character are prominent and rule the land. In times of moral breakdown this is inverted.” (Boice)

2. (Mic_6:13-16) God’s judgment on greedy and wicked Israel.

“Therefore I will also make *you* sick by striking you, by making *you* desolate because of your sins. You shall eat, but not be satisfied; hunger *shall be* in your midst. You may carry *some* away, but shall not save *them*; and what you do rescue I will give over to the sword. You shall sow, but not reap; you shall tread the olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil; and *make* sweet wine, but not drink wine. For the statutes of Omri are kept; all the works of Ahab’s house *are done*; and you walk in their counsels, that I may make you a desolation, and your inhabitants a hissing. Therefore you shall bear the reproach of My people.”

a. **You shall eat, but not be satisfied . . . what you do rescue I will give over to the sword:** God promises a

tragic end for their ill-gotten gains. He will allow them no satisfaction or blessing in what they possess.

b. **All the works of Ahab's house are done; and you walk in their counsels:** Instead of walking in the ways of the LORD, they walked in the sinful example of wicked kings before them, and in the **counsels** of the ungodly.

i. "*Omri*, king of Israel, the father of Ahab, was one of the worst kings the Israelites ever had; and *Ahab* followed in his wicked father's steps. The *statutes* of those kings were the very grossest *idolatry*." (Clarke) (Mic 6:2) Hear the LORD's accusation, you mountains,

you enduring foundations of the earth!

For the LORD has a case against his people;

he has a dispute with Israel!⁴

(Mic 6:3) "My people, how have I wronged you?⁵

How have I wearied you? Answer me!

(Mic 6:4) In fact, I brought you up from the land of Egypt,

I delivered you from that place of slavery.

I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to lead you.⁶

(Mic 6:5) My people, recall how King Balak of Moab planned to harm you,⁷

how Balaam son of Beor responded to him.

Recall how you journeyed from Shittim to Gilgal,

so you might acknowledge that the LORD has treated you fairly."⁸

(Mic 6:6) With what should I⁹ enter the LORD's presence?

With what¹⁰ should I bow before the sovereign God?¹¹

Should I enter his presence with burnt offerings,

with year-old calves?

(Mic 6:7) Will the LORD accept a thousand rams,

or ten thousand streams of olive oil?

Should I give him my firstborn child as payment for my rebellion,

my offspring — my own flesh and blood — for my sin?¹²

(Mic 6:8) He has told you, O man, what is good,

and what the LORD really wants from you:¹³

He wants you to¹⁴ promote¹⁵ justice, to be faithful,¹⁶

and to live obediently before¹⁷ your God.

(Mic 6:9) Listen! The LORD is calling¹⁸ to the city!

It is wise to respect your authority, O LORD!¹⁹

Listen, O nation, and those assembled in the city!²⁰

(Mic 6:10) "I will not overlook,²¹ O sinful house, the dishonest gain you have hoarded away,²²

or the smaller-than-standard measure I hate so much.²³
(Mic 6:11) I do not condone the use of rigged scales,

or a bag of deceptive weights.²⁴
(Mic 6:12) The city's rich men think nothing of resorting to violence;²⁵

her inhabitants lie,²⁶

their tongues speak deceptive words.²⁷
(Mic 6:13) I will strike you brutally²⁸

and destroy you because of your sin.
(Mic 6:14) You will eat, but not be satisfied.

Even if you have the strength²⁹ to overtake some prey,³⁰
you will not be able to carry it away;³¹
if you do happen to carry away something,

I will deliver it over to the sword.
(Mic 6:15) You will plant crops, but will not harvest them;

you will squeeze oil from the olives,³² but you will have no
oil to rub on your bodies;³³

you will squeeze juice from the grapes, but you will have no
wine to drink.³⁴
(Mic 6:16) You implement the regulations of Omri,

and all the practices of Ahab's dynasty;³⁵

you follow their policies.³⁶

Therefore I will make you an appalling sight,³⁷

the city's³⁸ inhabitants will be taunted derisively,³⁹

and nations will mock all of you."⁴⁰

(Mic 7:1) ***Micah Laments Judah's Sin***

I am depressed!¹

Indeed,² it is as if the summer fruit has been gathered,

and the grapes have been harvested.³

There is no grape cluster to eat,

no fresh figs that I crave so much.⁴

(Guzik)

Mic 7:1-20

MICAH 7 - ISRAEL'S CONFESSION AND COMFORT

A. God's people humbly confess their sin.

1. (Mic_7:1-4) An honest confession of their sinful state.

Woe is me! For I am like those who gather summer fruits, like those who glean vintage grapes; *there is no* cluster to eat of the first-ripe fruit *which* my soul desires. The faithful *man* has perished from the earth, and *there is* no one upright among men. They all lie in wait for blood; every man hunts his brother with a net. That they may successfully do evil with both hands; the prince asks *for gifts*, the judge *seeks* a bribe, and the great *man* utters his evil desire; so they scheme together. The best of them *is* like a brier; the most upright *is sharper* than a thorn hedge; the day of your watchman and your punishment comes; now shall be their perplexity.

a. **Woe is me!** On behalf of the sinful nation, the Prophet Micah now confesses the sin of God's people. First, he recognizes that their sin has left them *impoverished* (**there is no cluster to eat of the first-ripe fruit which my soul desires**). Then he describes some of their specific sins and their general character, revealing their deeply ingrained sin against others.

b. **The day of your watchman and your punishment comes; now shall be their perplexity:** When the sinner is immersed in sin and feeling successful, they feel like there is no price to pay for their sin. Nevertheless, there will come **the day of your watchman and your punishment**. The confident self-confidence of the sinner will be turned to **perplexity**.

2. (Mic_7:5-7) Crumbling relationships among God's people. Do not trust in a friend; do not put your confidence in a companion; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom. For son dishonors father, daughter rises against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies *are* the men of his own household. Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.

a. **Do not trust in a friend:** Because of their rampant sin and selfishness, personal relationships have crumbled among God's people. One cannot **trust in a friend** or put **confidence in a companion**, and even blood relatives are at war with each other.

b. **Therefore I will look to the LORD . . . my God will hear me:** In this sin-immersed culture, there are few people to give confidence or compassion - so one can only **look to the LORD**.

i. This is a *bad* thing, because people should be honorable and trustworthy enough so that we can find confidence and compassion from them. Nevertheless, God can use this as a *good* thing, because it forces people to put their trust in the

only One who can never let them down - the **God of my salvation**.

3. (Mic_7:8-10) The humble state of God's people.

Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD *will be* a light to me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case and executes justice for me. He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness. Then *she who is* my enemy will see, and shame will cover her who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?" My eyes will see her; now she will be trampled down like mud in the streets.

a. **Do not rejoice over me, my enemy**: Micah speaks for those brought low by personal sin and the sin of the community. In their humble place, he warns their enemies to not **rejoice** over their condition because **when I fall, I will arise** and **when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me**. "You see me brought low now, but you should know that it isn't for long. God will lift me up."

b. **I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him**: Speaking for the sinful people, Micah "manfully" takes responsibility for their sin. The idea is, "I know that I have sinned, and so I will accept my correction." Micah knows that God's people will stay in their low place **until He pleads my case and executes justice for me**. They are totally abandoned unto God's care.

i. "Herein is discovered the difference between remorse and penitence. In remorse a man is sorry for himself; he mourns over his sin because it has brought suffering to him. In penitence he is grieved by the wrong sin has done to God; he yields his personal suffering in the confidence that by it God is setting him free from his sin." (Morgan) c. **He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness**: At the same time, there is complete confidence in the salvation of God and their vindication

before their enemies. This shows that God's people know their sinful state, but they also know the greatness of God's redemption.

B. God's comfort and pardon to His people.

1. (Mic_7:11-13) The restored city of the people of God.

In the day when your walls are to be built, *in* that day the decree shall go far and wide. *In* that day they shall come to you from Assyria and the fortified cities, from the fortress to the River, from sea to sea, and mountain *to* mountain. Yet the land shall be desolate because of those who dwell in it, and for the fruit of their deeds.

a. **In the day when your walls are to be built, in that day the decree shall go far and wide:** When the time comes for Israel's restoration, God will send a call out **far and wide** to gather and restore His people.

b. **Yet the land shall be desolate because of those who dwell in it:** When God gathers Israel for restoration, they will come to a **desolate** land, ruined because of the judgment of God on the sin of His people.

2. (Mic_7:14-15) God cares for His people as in days of old.

Shepherd Your people with Your staff, the flock of Your heritage, who dwell solitarily *in* a woodland, in the midst of Carmel; let them feed *in* Bashan and Gilead, as in days of old. "As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders."

a. **Shepherd Your people with Your staff:** After God's people are brought back to the place they belong, they are lovingly cared for by the LORD Himself. The LORD *shepherds* them, and *feeds* them.

b. **As in the days of old:** There was a time when God's people enjoyed this kind of close relationship with Him. Now, that previous relationship will be restored, and He will **show them wonders**. The wonders come *out of* the close relationship with the Shepherd.

3. (Mic_7:16-17) The nations are brought low before restored Israel.

The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall put *their* hand over *their* mouth; their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent; they shall crawl from their holes like snakes of the earth. They shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of You.

a. **The nations shall see and be ashamed:** When Israel is restored to the land and enjoys a restored relationship with the LORD, then those who opposed God's people will see how wrong they were to fight against them.

b. **They shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of You:** Seeing the greatness of God's restoration will make the nations respect the LORD in a way they didn't before. They will see the power and love of God *in action*.

4. (Mic_7:18-20) The glorious mercy and pardon of God.

Who *is* a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights *in* mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. You will give truth to Jacob *and* mercy to Abraham, which You have sworn to our fathers from days of old.

a. **Who is a God like You:** In light of the glorious restoration of the Lord, Israel Micah glorifies the God of such great forgiveness (**pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage**). Micah sees that God's forgiveness is so great, that it can't even be compared to what often passes for forgiveness among men.

i. Boice on **Who is a God like You:** "It is a theme verse and appropriately ends the book. For it is a play on Micah's name. Micah means 'Who is like Yahweh?'"

b. **Because He delights in mercy:** *Why* does God have such great mercy and forgiveness to His people? The reasons are in *Him*, not in His people. It is simply **because He delights in mercy**.

i. If God **delights in mercy**, *then why are some men lost?* Because God doesn't delight in mercy so as to shame His justice. God opens His hand of mercy to all who will receive it, but those who will not receive His mercy can blame only themselves.

ii. If God **delights in mercy**, *then why is He not always merciful?* Because there comes time when the guilty must be punished. God's judgments are in themselves expressions of mercy, because they are like the cutting away of cancer. The surgery hurts, but must take place or the whole body will die.

iii. If God **delights in mercy**, *then why is there an unpardonable sin?* We should be grateful that there is only one unpardonable sin - the sin of rejecting His mercy.

iv. If God **delights in mercy**, *then why do I feel that He can't have mercy on me?* In such cases, we should trust God and not our feelings. "Whatever despair may whisper or doubt may suggest, one text of Scripture is worth fifty fears and doubts, or fifty thousand either . . . All objections to the delight of God in mercy are but illusions of your brain, or delusions of your heart." (Spurgeon) v. If God is this merciful to those who sin against Him, do we have any justification for not showing mercy to those who sin against us? "To all of you I would say - take care, as you expect the mercy of God, to deal it out to others.

Never say, 'I won't forgive,' for you seal your own condemnation when you do, and if you forgive not your brother his trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. You have chosen your own destruction when you shut the door against your child, or against your neighbor, and say, 'I will treasure up that enmity as long as I live.' I tell you, sirs, your offerings at God's altar are an abomination to him until you have forgiven every one of your fellows his trespasses." (Spurgeon)

c. **He will again have compassion on us:** God's people once knew His compassion, but they resisted and rejected it.

Now they can know it again, confident that **He will again have compassion on us.**

i. His **compassion** is shown in that the LORD **will subdue our iniquities.** He loves us as sinners, but loves us too much to leave us there. His **compassion** saves us from our sin.

ii. His **compassion** is shown in that the LORD **will cast all our sins in to the depths of the sea.** God will not “hold on” to our sin, but forgive us instead. This means there is no “probation” with God’s forgiveness. He doesn’t forgive our sins just to leave them around to hang over our head. In His **compassion**, He does away with our sins, casting them **to the depths of the sea** - and then He puts a “No Fishing” sign there!

iii. His **compassion** is shown in that the LORD **will give truth to Jacob.** God’s people not only need His mercy, they need His **truth** and He is compassionate enough to give His **truth** as He gives mercy and pardon.

d. **Which you have sworn to our fathers from days of old:** In concluding His prophecy, Micah sees God’s future work as a continuation of His past work to the **fathers** of Israel. Micah knew that the same love, compassion, and mercy He showed to their **fathers** was available to them - if they received it in faith.

(Mic 7:2) Faithful men have disappeared⁵ from the land;

there are no godly men left.⁶

They all wait in ambush so they can shed blood;⁷

they hunt their own brother with a net.⁸

(Mic 7:3) They are determined to be experts at doing evil;⁹

government officials and judges take bribes,¹⁰

prominent men make demands,

and they all do what is necessary to satisfy them.¹¹
(Mic 7:4) The best of them is like a thorn;

the most godly among them are more dangerous than a row
of thorn bushes.¹²

The day you try to avoid by posting watchmen —
your appointed time of punishment — is on the way,¹³

and then you will experience confusion.¹⁴
(Mic 7:5) Do not rely on a friend;

do not trust a companion!

Don't even share secrets with the one who lies in your
arms!¹⁵
(Mic 7:6) For a son thinks his father is a fool,

a daughter challenges¹⁶ her mother,

and a daughter-in-law her mother-in-law;

a man's enemies are his own servants.¹⁷
(Mic 7:7) But I will keep watching for the LORD;

I will wait for the God who delivers me.

My God will hear my lament.¹⁸
(Mic 7:8) ***Jerusalem Will Be Vindicated***

My enemies,¹⁹ do not gloat²⁰ over me!

Though I have fallen, I will get up.

Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light.²¹
(Mic 7:9) I must endure²² the LORD's anger,

for I have sinned against him.

But then²³ he will defend my cause,²⁴
and accomplish justice on my behalf.

He will lead me out into the light;

I will experience firsthand²⁵ his deliverance.²⁶
(Mic 7:10) When my enemies see this, they will be covered
with shame.

They say²⁷ to me, "Where is the LORD your God?"

I will gloat over them.²⁸

Then they will be trampled down²⁹

like mud in the streets.
(Mic 7:11) It will be a day for rebuilding your walls;

in that day your boundary will be extended.³⁰
(Mic 7:12) ***A Closing Prayer***

In that day people³¹ will come to you³²

from Assyria as far as³³ Egypt,

from Egypt as far as the Euphrates River,³⁴

from the seacoasts³⁵ and the mountains.³⁶

(Mic 7:13) The earth will become desolate³⁷

because of what its inhabitants have done.³⁸

(Mic 7:14) Shepherd your people with your shepherd's rod,³⁹

the flock that belongs to you,⁴⁰

the one that lives alone in a thicket,

in the midst of a pastureland.⁴¹

Allow them to graze in Bashan and Gilead,⁴²

as they did in the old days.⁴³

(Mic 7:15) "As in the days when you departed from the land of Egypt,

I will show you⁴⁴ miraculous deeds."⁴⁵

(Mic 7:16) Nations will see this and be disappointed by⁴⁶ all their strength,

they will put their hands over their mouths,

and act as if they were deaf.⁴⁷

(Mic 7:17) They will lick the dust like a snake,

like serpents crawling on the ground.⁴⁸

They will come trembling from their strongholds

to the LORD our God;⁴⁹

they will be terrified⁵⁰ of you.⁵¹

(Mic 7:18) There is no other God like you!⁵²

You⁵³ forgive sin

and pardon⁵⁴ the rebellion

of those who remain among your people.⁵⁵

You do not remain angry forever,⁵⁶

but delight in showing loyal love.

(Mic 7:19) You will once again⁵⁷ have mercy on us;

you will conquer⁵⁸ our evil deeds;

you will hurl our⁵⁹ sins into the depths of the sea.⁶⁰

(Mic 7:20) You will be loyal to Jacob

and extend your loyal love to Abraham,⁶¹

which you promised on oath to our ancestors⁶²

in ancient times.⁶³